

### Can my family take showers or baths using tap water?

The risk of bathing or showering in tap water is uncertain and should be avoided, particularly by people with open wounds or who are immunocompromised. For those who choose to shower or bathe in tap water, minimize time spent in the water and be sure to keep eyes and mouth closed. Babies and young children should not bathe or shower in tap water because they often swallow water accidentally.



### Can I wash my dishes?

You may use your dishwasher if it has a sanitizing cycle. If unsure, use pre-boiled water for washing your dishes.

### Coffee maker? Ice maker?

None of these devices should be used if they are directly connected to your water supply. Also, filters are unacceptable for removing bacteria. Once you have been notified that the boil order has been lifted, these devices should be cleaned and sanitized according to the operator's manual for the device.

### Can I give my pets tap water?

Although pets are not normally affected by the same diseases as humans, caution suggests giving pets pre-boiled or bottled water.



### Questions?

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For more information, visit our website at  
[www.rockfordil.gov](http://www.rockfordil.gov)

# Boil Orders

What, When, Where, Why

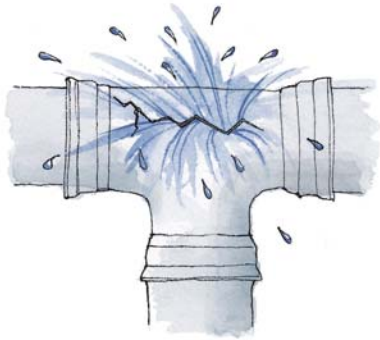


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What, when, where, Why

## When is a boil order issued?

A boil order is issued by a water system when technical / physical problems in the water system have increased the possibility of bacteriological contamination.



In general, a boil order must be issued any time the pressure in the water system falls below 20 psi. The most common cause of a boil order is a main break that results in the loss of pressure in the distribution system. Boil orders are also issued when repairs on a fire hydrant, water main or valve result in shutting off water supply to our customers.

## How do I know if my home is under a boil order?

The City makes every attempt to notify all customers involved in the event of a boil order. If the area shut down is relatively small (a couple of blocks or so), all homes and/or businesses are tagged on the front door with the date and

duration of the shutdown. If the area shut down is larger, a press release is sent to radio and television stations as well as the newspaper. The boil order boundaries are also posted on our City web site ([www.rockfordil.gov](http://www.rockfordil.gov)).



## How long does a boil order last?

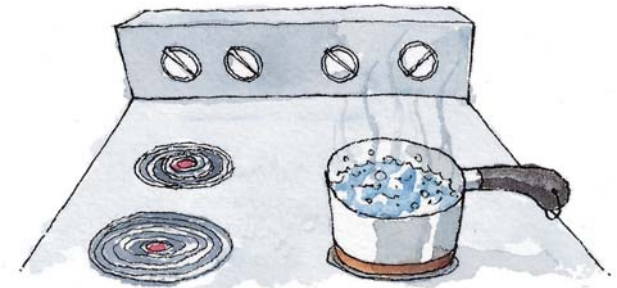
Each boil order situation is different making it difficult to predict how long the boil order will remain in effect. Once the break or repair is complete, a water sample is analyzed for the presence of bacteria. The boil order will not be lifted until testing shows



that the water meets public health standards. The analysis takes a minimum of 24 hours, so the minimum duration of a boil order is 24 hours. The duration of the boil order is written on your door tag. In the event of a larger outage, the City will inform the media when the boil order can be lifted.

## How can I make my water safe?

During a boil order, boiling the water is the best way to ensure that it is free of illness-causing organisms. Bring water to a rolling boil for a **minimum of five minutes** prior to use. When it cools,



refrigerate the water in clean containers. Boiled water should be used for drinking, ice cubes, brushing teeth, baby's formula, washing fruits/vegetables, preparing food, preparing coffee, tea, lemonade, etc.

## Can I wash my hands using tap water?

It is recommended that you wash your hands using soap and either bottled or pre-boiled water. An alcohol-based hand sanitizer may also be used.